



May 2005

**Department of Public Works & Transportation's
Division of Capital Development**

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The Plan Ahead is a project newsletter published by the Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPWT).



THE PLAN AHEAD

Art Holmes, Jr., Director, Department of Public Works & Transportation

Douglas M. Duncan, County Executive

DPWT Prepares to Spring Pedestrian Enhancements in Bethesda

The 1994 Bethesda Central Business District (CBD) Sector Plan recommends that specific bikeway connections and pedestrian access improvements be provided for progression from Stage I to Stage II development to increase employment capacity. Department of Public Works and Transportation's (DPWT) Bethesda Bikeway and Pedestrian Facilities Capital Improvements Program project will plan, design and implement continuity to the County's overall bikeway network, enhancements to pedestrian circulation including access, and improvements transportation deficiencies at key intersections in Bethesda, Maryland.

In December 2004, the first location, **Montgomery Lane and Woodmont Avenue** was completed for an intersection neck down and the installation of pedestrian countdown traffic signal heads.



At Montgomery Lane/Woodmont Avenue intersection, construction crew works to replace the expansive roadway pavement with wider pedestrian refuge island.

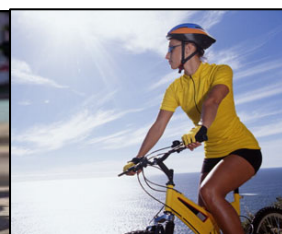
Newsletter Purpose

In January 2005, the DPWT held a public meeting to present concept plans for pedestrian improvements for:

1. Norfolk Avenue between Rugby/Glenbrook Avenues to Woodmont Avenue
2. Bethesda Avenue/Woodmont Avenue

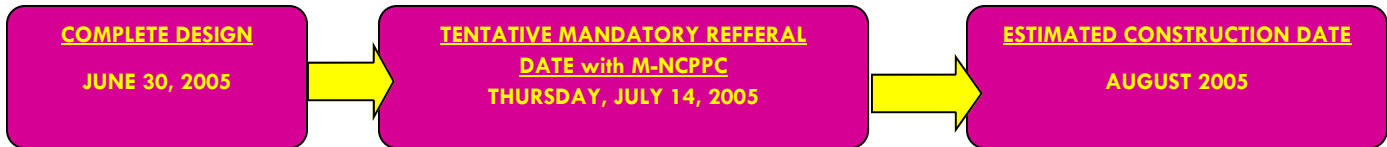
At the public meeting, DPWT presented a combination of three concepts to the public and solicited comments. DPWT appreciates the time and effort everyone took to supply the feedback.

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the public on the selection of the Recommended Alternative for both locations as the plans advance to the design phase.



Bethesda Avenue/Woodmont Avenue Improvements

In light of the feedback received from the public and the on-going redevelopment efforts for LOTS 31/31A, the original concept has been modified. Proposed improvements will now be limited to the western portion of the intersection. The major improvement will be the elimination of the hot right turn movement in front of the Barnes and Noble bookstore. The existing pedestrian/cafe area will be expanded to incorporate the closing of the hot right turning area. Efforts will be made to coordinate landscaping and appearance of the expanded pedestrian gathering island with interested parties. A flyer will be mailed prior to the commencement of construction.



* Dates are subject to change at anytime.



LEFT: The existing intersection of Bethesda Avenue/Woodmont Avenue is a favorite gathering place for local residents traveling on foot and bicycle.



RIGHT: Proposed improvements include the removal of the the southbound free right turn from Woodmont Avenue to Bethesda Avenue. It will be replaced with an expanded pedestrian gathering place in front of the Barnes and Noble bookstore. Additionally, wider crosswalks will be provided to accommodate the high volume of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Norfolk Avenue Improvements From Rugby/Glenbrook Avenues to Woodmont Avenue

Two concepts were presented at the January 2005 public meeting for improvements along Norfolk Avenue between Rugby/Glenbrook Avenues to Woodmont Avenue for pedestrian/bicyclist circulation and access. The concepts provided the following design elements:

CONCEPT #1:

- Back-In 45 degree angled parking along the north side and parallel parking along the south side of Norfolk Avenue
- Intersection neck downs to reduce pavement width for pedestrian crossings.
- Installation of pedestrian countdown timers.

- An increase in on-street parking spaces by approximately 30%, increasing parking spaces from 64 to 83 spaces.
- On-road bike lanes are not included since speeds of traffic will be slow due to back in parking design.

CONCEPT #2:

- Parallel parking along the north/south Side of Norfolk Avenue
- Intersection neck downs to reduce pavement width for pedestrian crossings.
- Installation of pedestrian countdown timers.
- On-road 5 foot bike lanes.
- A loss of one on-street parking space, reducing parking spaces from 64 to 63 spaces.

While both concepts had many benefits, the Department of Public Works and Transportation made a decision to carry Concept #2, which retains parallel parking along both sides of Norfolk Avenue.

Contact DPWT

As always, DPWT encourages you to share your comments and/or concerns. Due to the high volume of comments received, DPWT will not be able to respond directly to all feedback. Please forward comments to the Project Manager, Aruna Miller at:

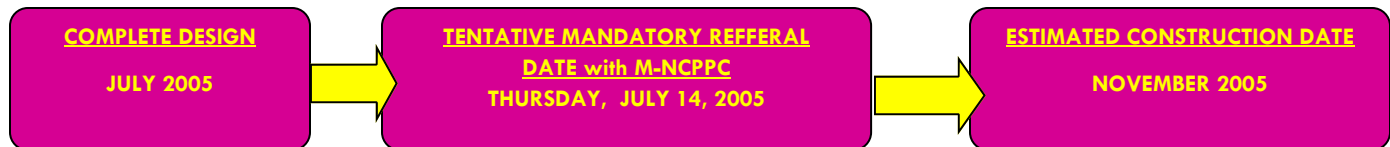
PHONE: 240-777-7194

FAX: 240-777-7277

E-mail:

aruna.miller@montgomerycountymd.gov

We encourage you to attend the Mandatory Referral session at Maryland-National Capital Parking and Planning Commission (MNCPPC). Please contact the project manager for specific time (as the time will not be established until a week before July 14, 2005).



* Dates are subject to change at anytime.

Attention All Sidewalk Café Owners

Sidewalk cafes have their charm and add to streetscape by allowing visitors and residents alike to sit outside, enjoy food and beverages, while absorbing the sounds and sights of urban life. Sidewalk cafes add to the vitality of Bethesda street life, add to the fabric of its neighborhoods - something that is unique to urban areas. But sidewalk cafes should not encumber pedestrians access and circulation.

Along Norfolk Avenue property owners (not lessee/tenant) must obtain permission for the placement tables and chairs within the sidewalk portion of the public right-of-way. Department of Permitting Services (DPS) Director has the authority under section 49-17 of the Code to enter into Revocable Agreements with property owners.

Declaration of Covenants

The property owner of a building where the business is located is required to execute a Declaration of Covenants for outdoor café seating. A lessee may not be the party which executes the covenants. Under the Department of Permitting Services' Outdoor Café Seating guidelines, a clear, five foot (5') sidewalk clearance must be provided for pedestrians at all times.

Contact Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

For additional information regarding Outdoor Café Seating, please contact Dan Ratliff with the Right-of-Way Permitting and Plan Review Section, at 240-777-6302.



Sidewalk Cafes must maintain a five (5) foot wide clear and unobstructed passage on sidewalks at all times.



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**Contact Aruna Miller, Project Manager, at 240-777-7194
for any further information on the projects identified in this newsletter.**

This newsletter is mailed to those citizens, adjacent to the project, whose names appear on the County's Geographical Information System's (GIS) data base. We apologize if you did not receive a newsletter.

Please contact Ms. Marsha Wheeler-Christ at 240-777-6174 to have your name added to the Bethesda Bikeways and Pedestrian Facilities project mailing list.



Download the newsletter at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/dpwt/capital/dcd/htm/BethesdaNewsletterMay2005.pdf>

For alternative formats of this newsletter, please contact the Division of Capital Development (DCD) at 240-777-7223.